Project Management Overview

Overview of Project Management Methodology

Introduction

Missouri Project Management Best Practices is created for the purpose of providing each agency with the opportunity and tools to run projects in the most effective manner. By standardizing project management methodology, each agency is able to understand, customize and support the following of these principles.

Best practices are used to present fundamental skills for the purpose of understanding processes and increasing communication between team members, among upper management and across agency lines. Each process presented in this manual has the capability of being customized to a specific agency and the needs of a project.

What is a Project Management Methodology?

The objective of a project management methodology is to provide common standards to ensure projects are conducted in a disciplined, well-managed and consistent manner. The ultimate goals of this methodology are to promote the delivery of quality products which are produced on time, within budget and accomplish the stated business objectives.

The methodology is conceptually shown in the figure below.

Project Management Process Groups

Initiating   Planning   Startup   Execution   Close Out
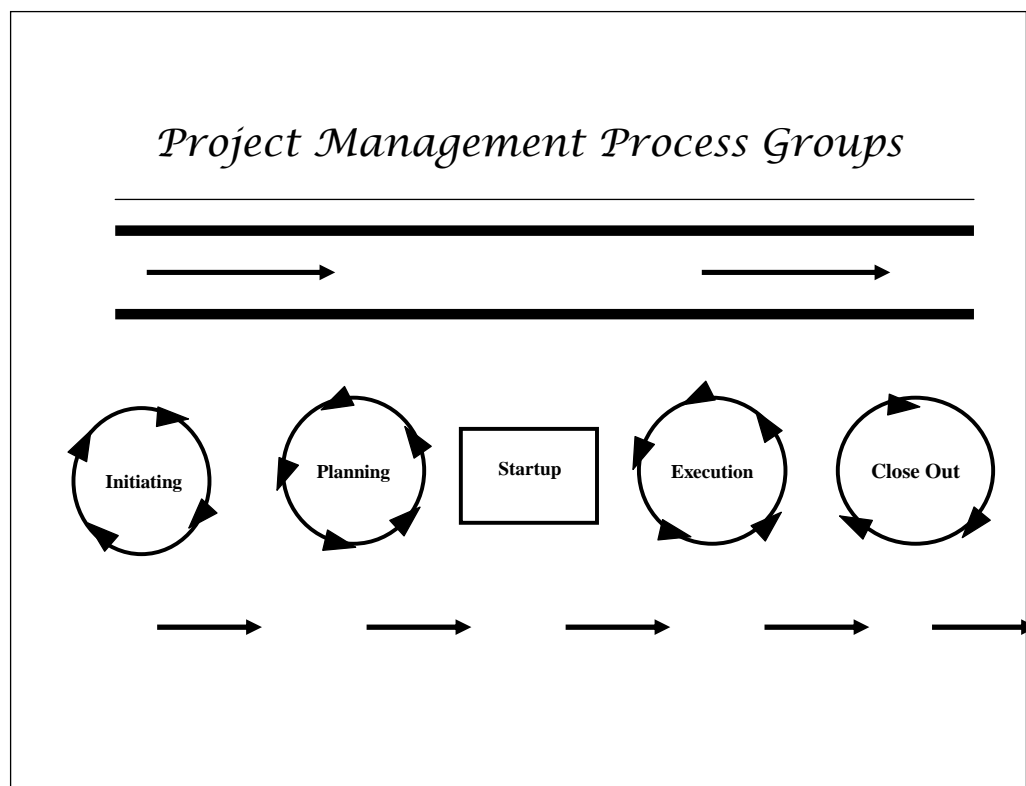
Project Management Overview
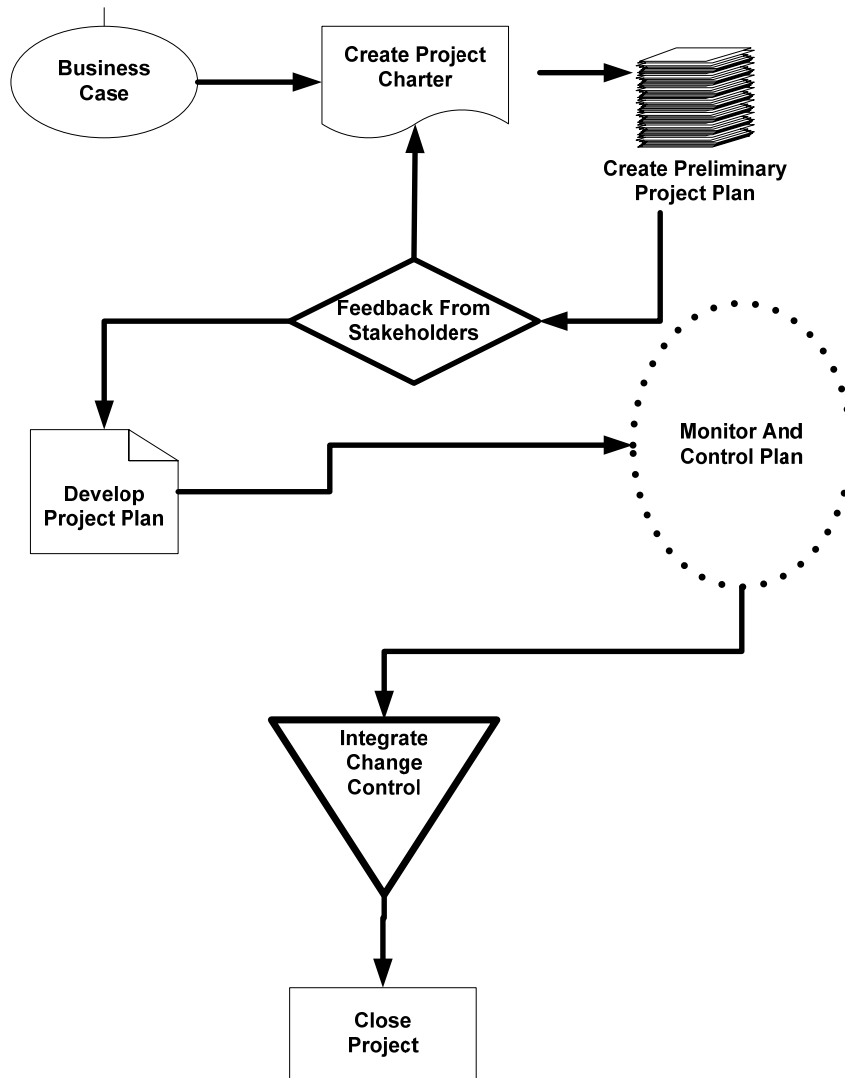
Project Management is an Iterative Process

The arrows indicate that project management is an iterative process. It is not a lock-step sequence of activities. In some instances, process groups overlap. The delineation between initiating and planning can sometimes be difficult to distinguish. In some cases, it may be necessary for the planning team to revert their activities back to initiating if it appears that the original budget, goal, vision or general assumptions have changed since the completion of the Business Case.

Each of the processes illustrated in the diagram has additional sub processes and must be integrated with the internal processes of the individual agency. This will make sure there are no conflicts between project goals and the objectives of the agency.

This methodology represents the coordinating mechanism between the creation of a project business case, initiating, planning, start-up, execution, close-out and, in some instances, operations and management. It should be noted that operations and management could be beyond the scope of the original project and might be a project itself with different goals and objectives.

Project Management Overview

Project Management Methodology

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   ┌──────────┐        ┌──────────────┐        ┌─────────────┐
   │ Business │───────▶│ Create Project│──────▶│             │
   │   Case   │        │   Charter     │        │   (stack)   │
   └──────────┘        └──────────────┘        └─────────────┘
                                               Create Preliminary
                                                 Project Plan

                       ◇ Feedback From ◇
                       ◇ Stakeholders  ◇

        ┌──────────────┐              ⋅ Monitor And ⋅
        │   Develop     │             ⋅ Control Plan ⋅
        │ Project Plan  │

                       ▽ Integrate
                         Change
                         Control

                       ┌──────────┐
                       │  Close   │
                       │ Project  │
                       └──────────┘
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As illustrated above, the project management methodology begins with a detailed business case which presents an overview of what the customer would like to achieve. Business case development can be a joint effort between the customer and the project representatives in achieving detailed information that will allow the project team to successfully draft the plan for completion.

As a key next step, a project charter is produced. Charter contents may vary widely from organization to organization; however, some basic elements are required. These include the following:

Project Management Overview

- A cover page and a table of contents.
- An executive summary of the project and a project overview statement.
- The project goal and objectives.
- The project scope (expressly what is and expressly what is not included in the project).
- A listing of expected deliverables.
- Organizations affecting and affected by the project (with affects briefly explained).
- The initial estimates for effort (work, in hours), for cost, and for total duration.
- Project assumptions (aspects considered true, real, or certain about the project).
- Project constraints (factors that place limits on the project).
- Project risks (an uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, can jeopardize the project).
- The project approach (top-down summary of how the project will be planned).
- The project organization (the organizational structure essential to success).
- Project approvals (signature of the sponsor, project manager, other key stakeholders).

After the business case and project charter have been completed, a preliminary plan is drafted by the project team.

The project plan may be a single document or be comprised of multiple sub plans. The project plan will develop from a draft to a final plan which will be used for tracking in monitoring the entire project. Once a project plan is authorized, the entire project will move into monitoring and control by the project team and project stakeholders.

During the monitoring and control phase of a project, all changes the customer desires to make will be handled as integrated change control. All adjustments to the scope, schedule and budget of the project will require documentation in the form of change requests.

The final process of the project is the close-out. Lessons learned will be documented as part of this process, along with contract and administration closeout.

Applicability of the Methodology

The project management methodology is potentially applicable to the management of any and all types of projects in Missouri State Government. How the methodology is applied in each State agency is based on the integration of the best practices with the internal processes of the agency. The internal projects of the agency might follow the best practices as presented here in great detail, or they can deviate in any manner necessary for the reaching of the desired goal.

Project Management Overview

Tailoring of the Methodology

The methodology is adaptable to meet the unique requirements of almost any type of project.

Large, complex projects require a more rigorous application of management processes than small, well-defined projects with readily achievable goals. The methodology supports this need for flexibility.

The Project Sponsor, Manager, or internal agency executives can determine how to tailor the methodology. This tailoring is then reflected in the Project Plan.

Depending upon the basic processes that an organization currently has in place to support project management, some changes may be required to successfully implement the methodology.   Organizations are encouraged to add to the processes to suit the culture and complexity of their environment.

The material presented here is intended to assist Project Managers and Teams in running or managing projects. However, due to the complexity of project management the best practices manual is to be used as a guide to follow with the understanding that the Project Team will need to make decisions along the way.

How the Methodology Will Improve Over Time

The best practices manual is intended to present project management methodology in a manner that is simplistic and easy to use. It is intended that this manual will be updated and function as a living document evolving and changing based on the needs of the state and aligned with Project Management Institute (PMI) principles and processes. In order to do this, it requires input from statewide Project Managers in the areas of processes, procedures, the creation of templates and making sure wording is as simple as possible for instant application.
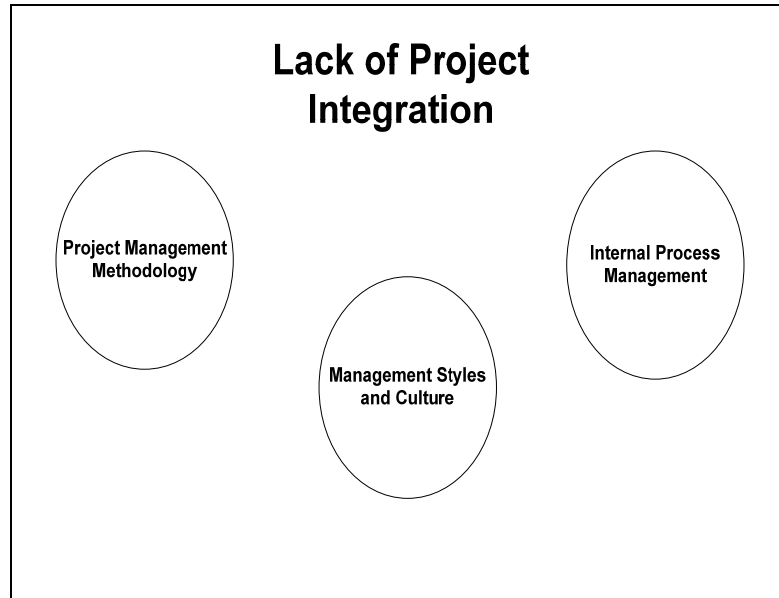
Project Management Integration Considerations

In the beginning of the project, it is important for Project Sponsors and Project Managers to consider what is needed to integrate the project methodology into the agency's culture. This means the ability to integrate project processes into the various processes already established in the agency.
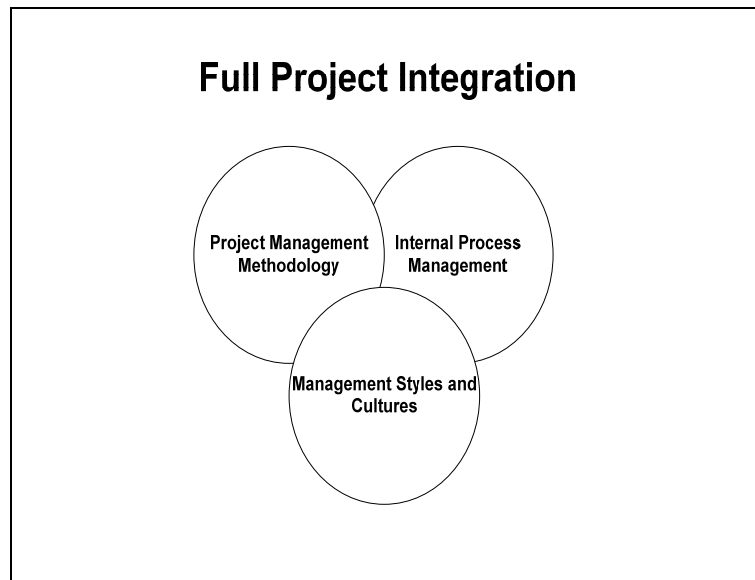
The diagram below shows the distinction of integrating the different processes. In order to increase the effectiveness of project methodology, all three processes of internal process management and management styles must converge into a process which does not conflict with each other.

This diagram shows how the three processes function in many agencies in a separated manner.

Project Management Overview

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│              Lack of Project                  │
│                Integration                    │
│                                               │
│    ╭───────╮                    ╭───────╮     │
│   │ Project  │                  │ Internal │   │
│   │Management│                  │ Process  │   │
│   │Methodology│                 │Management│   │
│    ╰───────╯        ╭───────╮    ╰───────╯     │
│                    │Management │               │
│                    │  Styles   │               │
│                    │and Culture│               │
│                     ╰───────╯                 │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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The diagram below shows how all the processes are working together in an integrated fashion. You will notice that all three support each other and do not conflict. In order for an agency to function in this manner, it takes strong support from upper management and a shift in agency culture.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                               │
│          Full Project Integration             │
│                                               │
│        ╭───────╮ ╭───────╮                    │
│       │ Project  │Internal  │                 │
│       │Management│Process   │                 │
│       │Methodology│Management│                │
│        ╰───────╮ ╭───────╯                    │
│             │Management Styles and│           │
│             │     Cultures        │           │
│              ╰───────╯                        │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Project Management Overview

What is a Project?

What is a Project?

Understanding the definition of a project helps in understanding the project management methodology and its effectiveness. A project is defined as follows:

> *A project is a temporary process, which has a clearly defined start and end time, a know-able set of tasks, a management structure and a budget that is developed to accomplish a well-defined goal or objective.*
>
> *According to PMI, "A project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service or result."*

The project management techniques defined in this methodology must be applied to a project in order to gain the benefits. Typically, a project is initiated by a person (or group) who realizes that a specific problem needs resolution. The problem is defined in an initial Business Case around potential solutions. Once the concept is defined and a decision is made to proceed, then a detailed Business Case is completed. Following the authorized Business Case, a Project Charter is developed. Afterward, a complete Project Plan can be created.

It is a Temporary Process

A project is considered a temporary process because once the end goal is achieved, the project is complete. For this reason, the end point of a project needs to be defined at the very beginning of the project to ensure successful completion. The reason some projects never end is because no one ever defined what constitutes complete!

The basic questions for defining success criteria are:

- Why are we doing this project?

- What do we hope to change?

- How will we measure success?

The criteria for project success must be quantifiable and measurable, and it must be expressed in terms of business value. Business value includes such things as lowering cost, improving productivity, improving customer service, return on investment, or implementing processes which are mandated.

Project Management Overview

It has Well-Defined Goals

Projects require well-defined goals to determine project completion. Without well-defined goals and objectives, a project lacks purpose. Well-defined goals are critical for developing a Project Plan that will come in on-time and on-budget.

This focus is accomplished by clear definition of milestones and deliverables. The problem definition needs to be carefully crafted. This process will determine the project objective, focus and the approaches for resolution. Without a clearly defined focus and stated objectives, the project will incur cost and time overruns (called scope creep) and may ultimately fail.

What is a Project Phase?

A phase is a group of related milestones, tasks or activities resulting in the production of a major deliverable. Projects are normally made up of phases. But, a project could be a single phase.

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What are Project Constraints?

All projects have constraints and these need to be defined from the onset. Projects have resource limits in terms of people, money, time and equipment. While these may be adjusted, they are considered fixed resources by the Project Manager. These constraints form the basis for project planning.
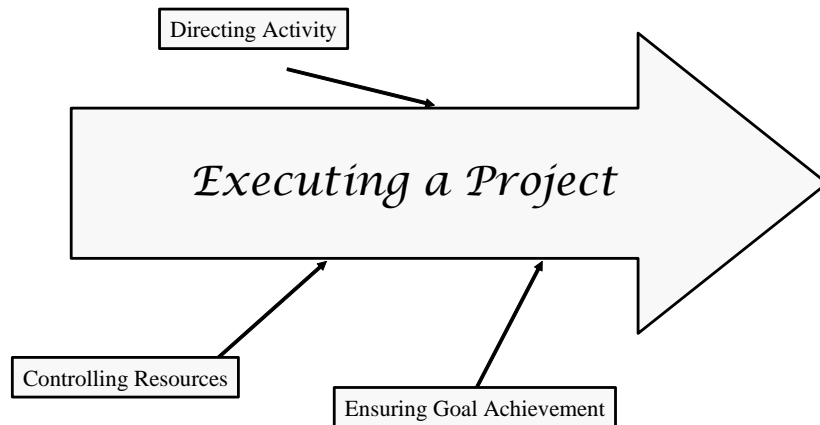
What is Project Management?

All of the processes, techniques and tools associated with initiating, planning, executing, controlling and closing the project are considered part of project management.

WHAT IS PROJECT MANAGEMENT?

Directing the activities associated with executing a project while controlling limited resources efficiently and effectively, ensuring that the end goal is successfully achieved.

Project Management Overview

Directing Activity

Executing a Project

Controlling Resources

Ensuring Goal Achievement

Successful project management requires established processes for organizational planning and communication, availability of techniques and tools that support management processes, and a culture that values cooperation, teamwork and planning.

Project management requires general management knowledge. The principles, practices, concepts, techniques, tools and skills of general management are the foundation for project management. These skills include the ability to work well with people, to take responsibility, to lead a group and to make decisions.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities

A successful project requires all key players of the Project Team buy into the Project Plan and accept responsibility for completion of assignments.

It is important to have a defined formal structure for the project and for the project staff. This is accomplished with the development of a unique organizational structure for each project. This provides each individual with a clear understanding of the authority given and responsibility necessary for the successful accomplishment of the project activities. Project Team members are accountable for the effective performance of their assignments.

Project organizations come in many forms. On a large project, individual role assignments may require full-time attention to the function. On smaller projects, role assignments may be performed part-time with staff sharing in the execution of multiple functions. These decisions are normally made during the project staffing function which occurs in the start-up process.

Who is Part of the Project Team?

The required Project Team includes groups or individuals like the following:
- People specifically charged with execution of the project solution. Regardless of how a project is organized, there are roles and responsibilities that should be considered for every project.

- Core Team Members
  - Steering Committee
  - Project Sponsor
  - Project Management
  - Project Team
  - Vendor

- Extended or Optional Team
  - Quality Assurance
  - Change Management
  - Training
  - Customer
  - Vendor

Project Management Overview

Importance of Stakeholders

The definition of a stakeholder according to PMI is as follows: "A person or organization that is actively involved in the project, or whose interest may be positively or negatively affected by execution or completion of the project. A Stakeholder may also exert influence over the project and its deliverables." It is important to understand this definition. The identification and input of stakeholders helps to define, clarify, change and contribute to the planning and the success of the project.

To ensure project success, identify stakeholders as early as possible, determine their needs and expectations, and manage those expectations over the course of the project.

Stakeholders on every project include:

- The Project Manager, who has ultimate responsibility for ensuring project success.
- The Project Sponsor, who leads in getting a project established.
- The Customer, who is the person, persons or organization using the product, service or result of the project.
- State Organization Management, who defines the business needs of the project.
- The Project Team members who are responsible for producing the project deliverables.
- Office of Budget and Planning and the Missouri Legislature.
- State agencies who are interested in the success of all projects.
- Division of Purchasing and Materials Management, who is interested in projects which involve a contractor or the procurement of goods or services.

Customers, both internal and external to the organization, are to be considered important stakeholders. Without input from the customer community, projects are likely to fail. Having customer-defined project goals, directly traceable to the final solution, increases the success for a given project.

The management of stakeholder expectations is potentially difficult because of conflicting goals and expectations. The expectations may require more resources than are currently available. Finding appropriate resolutions to these differences is a key to successful project management. A major project that does not have backing of senior management, for example, will have difficulty achieving success.

Project Management Overview

Steering Committee (Optional)

The Steering Committee represents the state and upper management. Their main roles include establishing the need for projects, conducting reviews and assessments, and approving project commitments. They are responsible for aligning the strategic plans, establishing project goals, and ensuring that projects are consistent with plans. They are also responsible for developing the procedures to ensure policies are followed.

Steering Committee Responsibilities

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

- Prioritize needs and include in state organization strategic plan.
- Ensure that sufficient resources are available to conduct projects.
- Review/approve commitments to external entities (e.g. vendors, other agencies).
- Ensure that staff is properly trained.
- Communicate strategic plans for the state.

INITIATING

- Select Project Manager and assist in staffing effort.
- Review/approve Business Case and cost/benefit analysis, if applicable.

PLANNING

- Review/approve Project Plan including risk analysis. (large projects)
- Budget and establish financial reserves based on project priority.

PROJECT START-UP

- Ensure project staff availability by working with Project Sponsor and Project Manager.
- Ensure that funding is available to Project Sponsor.

PROJECT EXECUTION

- Regularly participate in Steering Committee meetings.
- Monitor changes to the Project Plan, as needed.
- Review risk mitigation plans and act on the Project Manager's recommendations.
- Review/approve changes in contract commitments.
- Monitor project methodologies and practices.
- Review relationship of vendors and State.

CLOSE-OUT

- Monitor that Lessons Learned sessions are taking place.
- Approve project methodology changes.
- Review PIER (Post Implementation Evaluation Review).

Project Management Overview

Project Sponsor

One of the important project stakeholders is the Project Sponsor. The Project Sponsor should have the influence to ensure the project has sufficient priority to enable success. The Sponsor, along with the Steering Committee, is responsible for providing the funding and staffing resources to complete the project successfully.

The Sponsor is usually representative of upper management. The Project Sponsor is typically part of the state organization's management and should be a strong advocate for the project and its successful completion.

Project Sponsor Responsibilities

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

- Articulate executive requirements.
- Ensure that requirements are met.
- Serve as active supporter of project management theories, models and processes.
- Assist in gaining funding.

INITIATING

- Define sponsor needs and state priorities.
- Ensure customer and executive support of project.

PLANNING

- Review and approve the Project Plan.
- Participate in giving feedback during planning process.
- Approve funding along with Steering Committee.

PROJECT START-UP

- Assign personnel through the Project Manager.
- Assist in freeing up staff of those working on the project.
- Attend Kick-off meeting. (Optional)

PROJECT EXECUTION

- Monitor requirements and quality reviews.
- Provide written agreement to requirements.

CLOSE-OUT

- Monitor Lessons Learned documents.
- Review PIER (Post Implementation Evaluation Review).

Project Management Overview

Project Manager

The Project Manager has primary responsibility for project planning, the quality of a project's deliverables and the successful completion of a project. The Project Manager must be assigned early in the initiating, planning and start-up processes. Though it can and probably will be the same Project Manager, the methodology does allow for a different Project Manager for each of these major processes. Though the Project Manager facilitates the production of the Business Case and the Project Plan, he/she is actually owned by the Steering Committee.

Project Manager Responsibilities

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

- Implement project policies and procedures.
- Identify and acquire resources through the Project Sponsor and Steering Committee.
- For any given project, maintain staff proficiency and productivity, and ensure proper training is provided, if required.
- Establish and maintain quality in project.
- Identify and procure tools to be used on the project.

INITIATING

- Interpret and track Business Case objectives, success criteria and constraints.
- Conduct general cost/benefit analysis.

PLANNING

- Develop detailed Project Plan, tailoring methodology to reflect project needs.
- Ensure that management, customers, affected state organizations and contractors understand and follow the designate plan and processes.

PROJECT START-UP

- Finalize project baseline plan.
- Assign resources to project and assign work packages.
- Finalize project quality and change management plans.

PROJECT EXECUTION

- Regularly review project status, compare budget to actual values and present to Project Sponsor.
- Ensure Project Plan is updated and approved, as needed.
- Review the results of QA (Quality Assurance) reviews and perform QC (Quality Control).
- Participate in communicating all changes to stakeholders.
- Update project risks and establish prevention and mitigation procedures, as required.

CLOSE-OUT

- Obtain customer and management approval of final deliverables. Close out action items.
- Develop Post Implementation Evaluation Report (PIER); conduct Lessons Learned; lead Celebration!

Project Management Overview

Project Team

The Project Team has primary responsibility for producing the project deliverables. The Project Team assists the Project Manager in planning the effort and makes commitments to complete the project within established schedule and budget constraints. The Project Team includes the specialists responsible for implementing the project. The other stakeholders should interact with the Project Team to ensure requirements are correctly implemented.

Project Team Responsibilities

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

- Identify possible solutions to all project problems.
- Implement deliverables within budgeted cost and schedule.
- Assist in giving updated status and reports along with recommendations.
- Support project planning and tracking activities.

INITIATING

- Provide general estimates for developing deliverables.
- Conduct feasibility studies, if applicable.

PLANNING

- Develop approach and associated estimates and schedules.
- Assist in the development of a QA/CM (Quality Assurance/Change Management) plan.
- Identify productivity tools for project.

PROJECT START-UP

- Ensure that all members of the Project Team understand the Project Plan and requirements.
- Coordinate balance in work duties and performance.

PROJECT EXECUTION

- Submit status reports to the Project Manager.
- Conduct work using management processes.
- Coordinate with QA, review QA results and correct any deviations.
- Help establish baseline documents.
- Develop project deliverables.
- Identify risks.
- Participate in change reviews.

CLOSE-OUT

- Participate in Lessons Learned sessions.
- Participate in celebration.

Change Management Team (Optional)

The change management processes and activities can be conducted by the Project Team. In large projects or in special circumstances, the Project Manager might decide to create a Change Management Team or Change Control Board who will specialize in examining the change management (CM) process.

The CM function is responsible for planning, coordinating and implementing project CM activities. In general, they are responsible for identifying changes of any kind to the project and ensuring that they are carefully managed. Change management makes sure the change orders are documented, authorized and tracked. In addition, change management must make sure the changes are communicated to all stakeholders and monitored for successful implementation.

Change Management Responsibilities

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

- Audit change requests on projects.
- Maintain change request logs documenting all change orders,
- Adjust all project plans to comply with all approved change orders.

INITIATING

- Provide CM approach based on requirements and organization standards.

PLANNING

- Help develop project CM plan.
- Help identify items to be placed under CM control.
- Help identify CM tools that support project needs.

PROJECT START-UP

- Update CM plan.
- Create and supervise the project change log.

PROJECT EXECUTION

- Lead project change control board and distribute change information.
- Record CM actions and maintain action item list.
- Control and distribute communication concerning change adjustments.
- Track all items placed under CM control.
- Perform CM audits.

CLOSE-OUT

- Participate in Lessons Learned session.
- Participate in celebration.
- Archive all logs and change requests.

Project Management Overview

Quality Assurance Team (Optional)

The Quality Assurance function of the project, in most cases, is handled by the Project Team. However, it is possible in large projects or, if desired by the Project Manager, to have a special Quality Assurance Team created.

The Quality Assurance function helps to ensure that the required project management processes and standards are followed. This team will conduct audits to verify the quality of the work on the project followed by feedback with suggestions or discrepancies found.

Quality Assurance Team Responsibilities

GENERAL FUNCTIONS
- Review and verify that QA processes are followed.
- Communicate violations of standards.
- Monitor complaints.

INITIATING
- Ensure that processes are followed.

PLANNING
- Verify that plans are reviewed by all stakeholders.
- Review process used for estimating and planning.

PROJECT START-UP
- Verify that requirements are clear and measurable.
- Ensure that risks are properly identified and tracked.
- Provide orientation to project staff and managers on the role of QA.

PROJECT EXECUTION
- Verify that state organization and project policies are followed.
- Collect and analyze project metric data.
- Coordinate audits and participate in internal reviews, as appropriate.
- Maintain noncompliance issues list under CM control.
- Monitor and conduct audits.
- Verify deliverables for conformance to policy and procedures.

CLOSE-OUT
- Project Team verifies that deliverables meet specifications.
- Project Team evaluates if policies are implemented successfully.
- Verify or survey customer for customer satisfaction.
- Participate in Lessons Learned session.
- Participate in celebration.

Project Management Overview

Customer

Customers are responsible for ensuring that their needs and goals are communicated and detailed in such a way that the Project Manager and Team understand all goals and objectives. The customer is responsible for participating in the development of the business case and allowing the Project Team time to conduct an interview.

Customer Responsibilities

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

- Articulate customer requirements goals and deliverables.
- Detail the Business Case with clearly defined and measurable objectives.
- Ensure that the internal culture is open to the new project.
- Be proponents of the project with continued feedback and communication.

INITIATING

- Create a detailed Business Case.
- Define customer goals, needs and objectives.

PLANNING

- Review Project Plan.

PROJECT START-UP

- Assign customer personnel, if needed, to the project.

PROJECT EXECUTION

- Assist in verifying that requirements are being followed.
- Accept project deliverables.
- Provide written agreement on requirements and qualifying criteria.
- Review current business practices and the impact the project will have on the practices.
- Develop appropriate training, if needed, to support the new processes.
- Work with the Project Team to facilitate ease of close-out.

CLOSE-OUT

- Sign-off on deliverables.
- Provide details for closing out project.
- Provide feedback on Project Team's abilities and performance.
- Assist in Lessons Learned session.

Project Management Overview

Project Review Team Management (Optional)

The Project Review Team is responsible for ensuring that these policies are followed by all state organizations. The review function includes reviewing proposed projects, contracts, and other project commitments, determining oversight requirements and, when necessary, recommending corrective action for a troubled project. Project review can be conducted either by an internal team specified by upper management or a steering team. If needed, this process can be contracted outside of the State of Missouri to a vendor.

Project Review Team Responsibilities

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

- Define State policy.
- Recommend project management methodology.
- Provide leadership and resources to improve project management for projects.
- Review state organization's deviations from standards and policies.
- Determine the best methodology for examining this project.
- Review with project sponsors the goals and objectives for this project.
- Determine metrics which are specific to the individual goals and deliverables of the project.
- Design a checklist of areas to be examined and measured.
- Create benchmarks which will be the norm for measuring success.
- Give feedback to Project Manager, Sponsor and upper management concerning findings.
- Document findings for project.
- Review and archive Post Implementation Evaluation Report. (state organizations)

Project Management Overview

Division of Purchasing

Office of Administration Division of Purchasing and Material Management is responsible for developing and enforcing the terms and conditions of a request for proposal (RFP), invitation for bid (IFB) and a subsequent contract, if work on the project is contracted or requires the acquisition of equipment, software or other purchased assets or resources.

Division of Purchasing Responsibilities

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

- Ensure that appropriate terms and conditions are included in procurement documents and contract.
- Negotiate contracts.
- Serve as primary point of contact with contractors through bid and proposal efforts.
- Assist in selection of contractors.

INITIATING

- Determine if procurement support is required.

PROJECT START-UP

- Establish the terms and conditions of contracts.
- Execute, negotiate and finalize contracts.

PROJECT EXECUTION

- Maintain master file of contract correspondence, invoices and letters of transmittal.

CLOSE-OUT

- Negotiate contract close-out.

The Value of the Planning Process

Overview of the Planning Process

The Project Plan evolves through the early stages and, by the time the project is ready to begin project execution, contains the detail required to successfully complete the project. Then, when implementation begins, the Plan is updated as required.

Planning in the Initiating Process

While only very general information may be known about the project at this time, it is important to capture this information for the planning process. In the initiating process, the focus of planning is on the project definition and on determining if the goals, objectives and successes are worth the cost of pursuing. A strategy for deriving a solution to the stated goals is important at this point. The problem being addressed by the project must be clearly stated, its goals and objectives identified, and the success criteria documented in the Project Charter. Also, the major assumptions and constraints that apply to the project must be defined. Without a description of this information, a Project Plan is difficult to complete.

Planning in the Planning Process

During this project phase, details of the Plan are determined and a detailed approach is defined. The full Project Plan is then developed. The Plan may include the following elements: a project summary, a work breakdown structure, a project organization chart, a schedule, a list of identified risks, a budget, a list of deliverables, a description of planned quality activities, a description of the change management process to be used, and a summary of project requirements.

The development of the Project Plan is an iterative process. Each element of the Plan is regularly revisited for changes and refinements, based upon further analysis and decisions made in developing other plan resources. This refinement also develops "buy-in" from all resources of the Project Team.

It is critical to get buy-in on the Project Plan prior to actually starting the project. Approval of the Plan commits the resources needed to execute the Project Plan.

Planning in the Start-up Process

To transition a project from planning to execution requires specific start-up activities. In the start-up process, the Team is assembled and a kickoff meeting is held to familiarize the Team with the elements of the Plan and the requirements of the system. Specific work packages are developed which detail and specify the activities to be performed. These work packages are at the lowest level

of the Project Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) and will include the costs, budgets and schedules associated with activities and tasks.

Sometimes, there may be a need to update the Project Plan during this stage to reflect negotiations or refinements in scope that occurred prior to the actual start of the project. In these cases, the Plan is reviewed and updated prior to presentation to the Team.

Also, in some projects, auxiliary plans (such as the change management or quality assurance plans) are further detailed in the start-up process. These plans are developed from strategies defined in the project planning stage. Often the Plan is adjusted during start-up due to the need to address holidays, vacations and the work loads of various team members.

Planning in the Project Execution Process

Planning in the project execution process consists of adjusting when it is determined that changes are needed to the project or product scope. It is important to know that project plans will change and that adjusting is a natural part of the process. Adjusting does not necessarily mean that a project is in trouble.

Frequent and extensive adjusting may, however, indicate that there are some serious issues with the Project Plan. It is better to replan than to simply throw away the original plan.

Planning in the Close-Out Process

A close-out process is performed once the project objectives have been met. Closing a project should be fairly routine. The first step is acceptance of the product, service, result or other expected outcome by the customer. The determination is based upon the success criteria defined in the very early concept and planning stages of the project. This acceptance may be informal or it may be very formal depending upon the criteria defined in the plan.

Once the project is accepted, all deliverables and project metrics are placed in an archived repository. Building a repository of past projects serves as both a reference source for estimating other efforts and as a training and planning tool for project managers. The information archived should always include the project plan history, any metrics collected on the project, and a record of lessons learned.

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CHAPTER 1
PROJECT MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW